"Hold Me."
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"Hold Me."

by Anonymous

Summary

Janus, over the years, had built up a sort of... persona, for lack of better word. A façade. An act.

To the others, he was Janus "Deceit" Sanders, Lord of the Lies, Sultan of Sarcasm. He was cold, tough, unwavering. He didn't need something as... lowly as a hug.

(Except he did.)

Notes

I'm tired, and I have two wips I could be working on, but I wrote this instead.

Warnings:
- Crying

I think that's it, let me know if now. Enjoy :)

See the end of the work for more notes

Janus really didn't know what the problem was.

That was a lie.

He knew exactly what the problem was. Touch starvation. Involuntarily, his lip curled in disgust. Thomas view the facets of his personality as human, for some reason, rather than abstract concepts, like the rest of the world. Usually, Janus quite enjoyed having a corporeal form; it was most certainly an upgrade from when his host was younger, and he was nothing but a floating orb, flitting aimlessly about in the abyss that was the Mindpalace.

Now he had arms. He could pick up books, eat, drink, beat Logan at chess, improv with Roman, bake with Patton, the lot of it. Unfortunately, closely resembling a human being came with one downside; a need for touch.

Really, it shouldn't be a problem, because it wasn't particularly difficult to engage in physical contact, all he had to do was ask. Easy peasy. Lemon squeezy.

(No, no it wasn't.)

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(Except he did.)

So now, he was trapped in this steel box he'd built for himself, unable to escape. He was an actor, cursed to forever play the same role, and never to break character. He wanted to ask, really he did, but he couldn't. He wasn't allowed.

His skin writhed at the persistent denial, crawling as if it was made of thousands of ants, rather than skin cells.

He tugged Virgil's old hoodie tighter around himself, trying desperately to fabricate the feeling of a hug. Except that was all that it was. A fabrication. A simulation.

A lie.

And Janus was far too aware of it for his liking. He gripped his arms, curling in on himself. Making himself as small as possible.

A lone tear trailed down his left cheek, getting caught in his scales, and Janus had to laugh. Now he was crying. Crying, because he wanted a hug.

And if his pride had its way, he'd never get one.

He sniffed, wiping snot from his face with Virgil's hoodie. Nausea curled in his gut at the, almost suffocating, feeling of loneliness.

He lay down on his bed, staying coiled in a fetal position. He pulled Virgil's hood over his head, trying to replicate the feeling of laying his head against a warm chest.

There he went again, with the lies.

Janus sobbed quietly into his knees, letting loose pathetic, keening whines. No one was there to hear them anyway.

"Janus?"

Oh, apparently there was. Showtime.

Janus hauled himself up, wiping his eyes. He shut them briefly, casting a glamour over his face to hide his less-than-stellar appearance. Whoever it was didn't need to see his runny nose and puffy cheeks. Those were for his eyes, and his eyes only.

"Come in!" He called, pleased when his voice came out confident, silky smooth.

(Well, what did he expect? It wasn't like he'd had years of practise or anything-)

The door cracked open hesitantly, and an unruly mop of overgrown hair peeked through.

Ah. Virgil. This encounter was going to be more painful than anticipated.

"Last time I checked, you were a snake, not a bat," his voice was deep and resonant, enveloping Janus in a way that he wished Virgil's arms would. "What's with the darkness?"

Janus shrugged.

"Headache," he lied weakly. Virgil's eyes narrowed, and Janus could tell he didn't buy it, but he didn't press, either.

Janus wasn't sure if he was upset or grateful.

"Yeah, ok. You seen my-"

Virgil paused, scrutinising him in a way that made Janus feel naked, despite the thick hoodie he was currently cloaked in.

"Oh. You have it. That's why I couldn't find it."

"Couldn't find what?" Janus asked dumbly.

"My hoodie."

Janus scanned the sleeves, checking for purple patches. There were none. Virgil seemed to sense his confusion.

"I was rearranging, and found it missing. And now I'd like it back, please." Virgil approached the bed, arms outstretched. For a second, Janus thought he was offering a hug. He shook himself.

God, now his own *mind* was toying with him.

Janus hugged the hoodie closer protectively, shuffling away on instinct. At Virgil's raised eyebrow, he spluttered, floundering for an excuse.

"I-it's cold," he said finally. And it was accurate, to some degree. Half truths were always the best

lies, after all. "I'll give it back later."

"Capelet, gloves? Where are they?" Virgil persisted, edging closer.

"They're uncomfortable! I can't wear them all the time, and-"

"Cut the act Janus-" oh, how Janus wished he could. "-something's up."

"Just the ceiling," Janus retorted, forcing boredom into his tone. "Nothing else."

Virgil heaved a frustrated sigh.

"Then hand it over."

"No."

Oh- oh God he was reaching forwards now. Janus could just throw himself into Virgil's arms and never let go. His blood bubbled beneath his skin, begging for Janus to give in-

"No!" Janus shrieked, much louder than he'd meant to. Virgil nearly stumbled at the sudden outburst.

For a moment, everything was still.

"...Janus-"

"No!" Janus screamed, louder still. He barely registered the feeling of warm tears pouring down his face. "You can't take it from me! You can't have it!"

He knew he was being hysterical, irrational. But the hoodie was his sole source of comfort, his last connection to the Side he used to call his friend. The very Side standing at the foot of his bed. Virgil needed to stop being so- so selfish! He already had a hoodie, why did he need this one? Was he *trying* to hurt Janus?"

Virgil had gone utterly silent, watching, open-mouthed as Janus broke down in front of him. Somewhere, deep inside, Janus was ashamed. He was throwing a temper tantrum, like a child.

He shoved that part of him further down.

"I need it! I need it! You don't- you don't understand! I need- I-I need..." Janus trailed off, sobbing into his bedsheets.

He felt the bed dip.

"What do you need, Jan?" Virgil's voice was soft, barely audible over the sound of Janus' ugly sobs. "Tell me."

The tension was palpable.

"Hug me," Janus blurted, eyes widening as his mouth seemed to move on its own accord.

"W-what?" Virgil spluttered. His eyes were the size of dinner plates.

"Squeeze me. Crush me. *Anything*."

The words fell out of his mouth in quicker succession, now that there was a crack in his resolve, leaking out his true feelings. He blubbered incoherently, like a pathetic little child.

You're making a fool of yourself, his mind chimed. *Why would he want to hug you? Stop being so desperate.*

Janus sobbed harder, clutching his bedsheets in his fists.

"Hold me," he begged, not even bothering to *try* and scrape up his tattered dignity. The façade was long gone, the mask shattered beyond repair. "Hold me, *please*."

There was a pregnant pause and, for a moment, Janus thought Virgil had already left sometime during his blubbering session.

Serves you right, getting your hopes up like that. No one would want to-

A pair of arms wrapped around him, and Janus gasped. The touch set his body on fire, burning where Virgil made contact. The hoodie suddenly felt stifling. His skin throbbed and itched, drinking up the contact.

"Oh, Jan..." Virgil murmured and, normally, Janus would've resented the pity in his tone. But there was nothing remotely normal about this situation, so Janus was willing to let it slide. Just this once.

"Why didn't you say anything? Why didn't you ask before?"

Janus didn't answer, smushing face into Virgil's shoulder. His hands grappled for something to grip, finally grabbing onto the front of Virgil's hoodie.

His skin crawled, and the heat, it wasn't enough. He wanted more. He needed more.

Notenoughnotenoughnotenoughnotenoughnotenoughnotenoughnotenoughnotenough-

Virgil seemed to sense his dissatisfaction (or maybe he'd just voiced his thoughts-), and his chest rumbled as he spoke once more.

"I've got an idea, Jan. But I need you to let g-"

"No!" Janus held tighter, trying to pull himself closer.

Who knew when he'd get this opportunity again? He had to take what he could, he wasn't done yet, Virgil couldn't leave *nonononononono-*

A gentle shushing noise cut through the hysteria.

"Let go, babe. Just for a sec. I just want to move you."

There was a hand rubbing his back, sending electric shocks surging through Janus' body. He was too consumed by his own thoughts to even process that Virgil had called him "babe".

And, suddenly, he was being eased away. Janus let out a strangled cry, and- there was that shushing again.

Janus relaxed against his will, and he was pulled away. Instantly, a deep chill set into his very bones, and his shuddered. The nausea was back with vengeance, and, if Janus had eaten anything in the past few days (he hadn't) then it would be making a reappearance over Virgil's lap.

And then he was being manhandled out of the jacket. He had half a mind to yank it back, hug it close, never let go, but Virgil was insistent, so Janus allowed him to take it away, leaving him in only his Razzle Dazzle t-shirt (ironic, really. He was feeling anything but razzle-y and dazzle-y).

Big mistake.

The frigid cold of the room rushed to greet him and the hairs on his arms stood on end. Janus shivered, and he could've sworn he heard Virgil coo.

"C'mon, Jan."

There was a grunt, and he was shifted gently into Virgil's lap. Warmth sparked in his stomach as he was pulled flush against a chest. Everything tingled. It was glorious.

Janus, unsure of what to do with his arms, tucked them between his and Virgil's chest, trying to preserve the warmth.

"Ok now," Virgil was talking again. "I'm gonna tuck you right against me."

Janus was pulled closer than he thought was possible, pressed so tightly to Virgil that they may as well have just been a single entity.

"Wrap your legs around my waist for me, babe, there we go..."

Virgil coaxed Janus into straggling him, so that he was pressed even closer.

"And then..."

There was a faint sound of a zip, and a gentle pressure, barely there, settled on Janus' back. It felt heavenly. Janus' top half was covered up almost completely. His ears brushed against fabric, as he sniffed, wondering why exactly he was surrounded by- oh.

He was in Virgil's hoodie. *Inside* of it. Along with Virgil.

His skin prickled happily, and Janus found he was inclined to agree. It was wonderful. He was trapped, but in the best way possible. He never wanted to leave.

A couple more tears fell as Janus struggled to comprehend that he was really, actually, truly being held.

"Better, hmm?" Virgil's chest vibrated as he chuckled. Janus nodded.

Virgil rocked them both back and forth, humming quietly. Janus felt his eye droop as he began to succumb to the siren song of sleep. He snaked his arms around Virgil's waist, hands lingering at the bottom of his shirt uncertainly. His skin itched for more contact.

Moremoremoremoremoremoremoremoremoremoremore-

"C-can I...?" He asked timidly.

"Can you what?" Virgil asked. Janus deflated slightly, unsure of how to ask for what he wanted. Unsure of whether what he wanted was even ok.

For the third time that evening (morning? Afternoon?) Virgil seemed to read his mind.

"You can ask for anything, Jan, it's ok. I promise you, whatever it is, it isn't weird."

"Oh yeah? And what if I asked to lick your shirt?" Janus retorted feebly. Virgil chuckled again; the feeling was like a massage chair for his cheek.

"Ok, maybe that was slightly weird. But I meant what I said. You can ask me anything."

Janus, again, had no idea how to vocalise his desire, so settled for tugging lightly at the hem of Virgil's shirt, hoping he'd understand. Thankfully, he got the message.

"Aw, Jay, of course. If you think skin to skin will help, by all means."

Now, having received permission, Janus slipped his arms underneath Virgil's shirt, relishing the way his skin crackled like pop rocks. He sighed, allowing his eyes to droop fully shut. Between the gentle pressure on his back, the soft humming, and the rhythmic to and fro, it was getting difficult not to fall asleep. Apparently breakdowns were exhausting. Who knew?

"Sleep," Virgil's voice was getting further and further away, buried under a thick layer of cotton.

Janus gave in to sleep, slumping fully against Virgil. The feeling of skin against his bare hands was grounding. As the last tendrils of consciousness slipped through his fingers, Janus could've sworn a pair of lips brushed against his forehead.

"I've got you, Jay."

I've got you.

End Notes

Comments and kudos are always appreciated!!

Take care <3

Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!